

MEMOIRS
OF
M. DANTON,
LATE
MINISTER OF JUSTICE
TO THE
NATIONAL CONVENTION,
WHO SUFFERED BY THE GUILLOTINE, SATURDAY
APRIL 5, 1794.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
GENUINE ANECDOTES
OF
M. ROBERSPIERRE,
LATE LEADER OF
THE REVOLUTIONISTS IN FRANCE,
WHO WAS GUILLOTINED JULY 28, 1794.

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M,DCC,XCIV.

This Day is Published, Price 4s. in Boards,

THE SECOND EDITION OF THE

MEMOIRS

OF

GENERAL DUMOURIER.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

In which all the principal TRANSACTIONS and INTRIGUES connected with the DETHRONEMENT and EXECUTION of LOUIS XVI. are fully displayed, and the Characters and Views of the different LEADERS of PARTIES in FRANCE, with the Causes of the present ANARCHY, accurately traced and delineated.

....VITAMQUE IMPENDERE VERO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

By J. P. BEAUMONT.

LONDON:

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The PREFACE.

AS in all probability no æra in history will be found more remarkable and interesting than the present, owing to the variety of opinions and occurrences which have proceeded both from good and evil intentions, a faithful record of the memoirs of those particular characters, who have distinguished themselves either by assumed or real pretensions to patriotism, must certainly be acceptable to readers of every denomination.

The following interesting Memoirs of the late M. Danton, and further Anecdotes of M. Roberespierre, have been collected from the best information. We cannot pretend to judge fairly of a man's character till we take a full and proper view of his whole conduct; the reader, therefore, of these Memoirs will, by a circumstantial account, be able to form a just opinion of the qualifications of two extraordinary characters: Danton was once the hero of the National Convention, and a striking instance of the fleeting enjoyments of transient prosperity; while Roberespierre has rendered himself very conspicuous, though once looked upon with the eye of contempt.

It is impossible, by reading, at different periods, mere sketches and imperfect fragments of men's opinions in daily papers, to judge, with any degree of candour and impartiality, of either their merits or demerits; but when every remarkable incident (during their popularity) is united, we are then capable of attaining some knowledge of their dispositions, and are consequently better judges of their characters.

It is necessary to observe that the following Anecdotes have been collected by a late resident in France; one who has been personally acquainted with the characters that are herein represented; and who, notwithstanding his natural feelings for the distracted situation of his country, has been guided both by impartiality and candour in the following detail, as he thinks no author whatever has any right to introduce his *private* opinion; but, by discovering *simple* facts, leave the reader to judge for himself. The person who has undertaken to hand down to posterity these Memoirs, has been furnished with the following particulars respecting the fate of M. Robespierre and his party, by one of the present Members of the National Convention.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS
OF
M. DANTON.

FEW characters have exhibited the vicissitudes of life in such glaring colours, as the chief subject of these memoirs. M. Danton we find at the summit of glory and popularity, when his adversaries were in a state of humility and disgrace; yet in the short space of two years (to which, being the only interesting part of M. Danton's life, we mean to confine this brief account) we see him disgraced and scorned by those very men, whom he disgraced and scorned before!

M. Danton being possessed of sufficient cunning to disguise his real sentiments, for a long time acted his part with prudence and discretion. When he thought it dangerous to avow his opinion, he was silent: when he deemed his absence highly essential towards preserving his credit, he was always happy in devising some evasion for staying at home; and there is little doubt, but his artifice and dissimulation, for some time, procrastinated his fate.

In the month of August, 1792, when the commotions of France came to their height, M. Brissot, having moved that the assembly should declare the late ministers unworthy the confidence of the nation, it was decreed that six citizens, who were not of its own body, should be elected, and that three commissioners in like manner should be nominated, and sent to each army; whereupon M. Danton was appointed by the *appel nominal*, Minister of Justice. He was now very much respected, though previous to this, all the municipal officers were suspended, but Danton, Manual, and Petion still retained their consequence, being to all appearance, the most eager in taking the following oath—

“ In the name of the nation I swear to maintain liberty and equality, or to die at my post !”

Some short time after this, he wrote to the assembly, requesting them to deliberate on the formalities to be observed in the publication and promulgation of laws. He was several times President of the assembly, it being decreed that every minister should sit in his turn, and act as President during a week.

M. Danton proposed that all citizens might contract marriage at twenty-one years of age, without the consent of parents, which was decreed. He received universal applause in the following speech (September the 2d), when exciting the citizens to arms—

“ It is a great consolation, gentlemen, to the ministers of a free people, to inform you that your country is about to be saved. All are in motion, all are rousing themselves throughout France, from one end of the kingdom to the other; you know that

that Verdun is not in the enemy's possession—you know that the garrison has sworn to die rather than surrender: but gentlemen, whilst Ministers are concerting with the generals, a great piece of news has arrived. The Commissioners of the Commons have proclaimed afresh at this instant, the danger of the country with more eagerness than is necessary: all the citizens of the capital are going to rendezvous in the *Champ de Mars*, to be divided into three bodies; some are going to fly towards the enemy (all those at least who have arms) others are working at the entrenchments, while the third division will remain, and present an enormous battalion of uplifted pikes. Gentlemen, you must take bold steps; we request you to declare that every citizen, who shall refuse to march against the enemy, shall be put to death; we must have severe measures; no one, when the country is in danger, can refuse his services without being declared infamous, and a traitor to his country. Gentlemen, in a Revolution we must be bold, and always bold! then success is certain! we request of you that within forty leagues from the spot of war, citizens who have arms shall either march against the enemy or give them up; those who remain shall be armed with pikes. Couriers shall be sent to the 83 departments; for the alarm-bells, which will be rung, will not be sufficient. The principal thing must be not to collect too many citizens in one place, that provisions may be easily distributed—We request not to be opposed in our operations, and to give us Commissaries to follow up our plans—we also think you ought to decree, that at this moment the citizens of Paris never deserved better of their country.”

Upon this he requested the assembly to decree,
1st. "That every citizen who either refused his person or his arms, should be punished with death;" and

2d. "That every citizen, of every municipality, more than forty leagues distant from the frontiers, should be either obliged to surrender his arms, or to march against the enemy."

These were accordingly decreed.

Few men ever displayed so much policy as M. Danton in the resignation of his office. As soon as it was proposed not only to banish every idea of royalty, but likewise to annihilate all individual influence, M. Danton rose, and to convince the assembly that he was by no means concerned with the party who had formed the plan of *Dictatorship* and *Triumvirate*, declared that before he would enter into the arguments, he would resign into the bosom of that assembly, an authority, with which he was invested on the 10th of August, amidst the noise of cannon, which hurled destruction upon despotism, for that now he considered himself only as the *plain* Representative of a sovereign people. He despised the king of France, as a tyrant annihilated.

"I was, says he, formerly minister, I am now a *Mandatory* of the people, and it is in this latter quality that I at present speak.

"Some have talked of oaths—something else than oaths is wanting. We stand in need of a steady and unmoveable basis for a new constitution.

"Let us first declare that the Representatives of the people are convinced that no stable constitution can exist, but after the formal acceptance of the majority of the citizens in the Primary Assemblies.

"After this declaration let us make another, no less grand, no less necessary. Until now the people have been agitated, because it was necessary to disorganize tyranny.

"Now

" Now, in order to re-establish peace, it is as necessary that the laws should be as terrible as the people have been; then the law will be avenged, and the people will become tranquil.

" Let us declare also, that all kinds of property, whether arising from land or from industry, shall be eternally maintained, and placed under the safeguard of all the French nation.

" After having established these two grand bases, adjourn your session; you will have done enough for the people."

This enthusiastic speech could not fail, at such a distracted time as this, of meeting with reiterated plaudits; consequently M. Danton grew more and more in favour. When the disturbances became very alarming at Orleans, Danton proposed that three commissioners should be instantly sent there, in order to restore peace, and stop the effusion of French blood.

Danton, having now secured no little credit among a club of distracted men, began to give his opinions more freely, and likewise to enforce them with warmth and violence. He coincided with Thomas Paine, who, upon a motion, " that all the administrative, municipal, and judicial bodies, as well as the judges of the peace, should be renewed; and that every person, whether he be of the profession of the law or not, should be capable of being elected a judge," contended, " that they should, at present, content themselves with the renewal of the judicial magistrates; and as the consideration of the *principle* would come much better hereafter, the present proposition served rather to overturn the judicial order than to organize it." Paine having thus expressed himself by an interpreter, M. Danton said that he respected
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his opinion. " He wished to decree the *principle* for the present, and then overturn the aristocracy of the men of the law, which he looked upon as horrible and revolting. Priests and lawyers, he observed, had always cheated and deceived the people. Justice ought to be administered according to the simple rules of reason. He was himself (he added) well acquainted with the *forms*, and knew they were tedious, vicious, expensive, and insufferable. He declared that such was the gross ignorance of the ancient tribunals, and such their want of foresight, that several of them, even after the Revolution, had carried on their correspondence with M. Jolly, a Minister in the days of tyranny ; and that by this means their baseness and corruption had been made known to a republican administration."

In consequence of these observations it was decreed, " That the people had a right to choose their judges out of all classes of citizens without distinction."

Danton, now intoxicated with ill-gotten applause, joined a favourite party, and with them indulged his private animosity, promoting personal altercation: with Merlin, Couthon, and others, he accused Robespierre, Marat, &c. of forming a party, with a view of ruling over and ruining the Convention. No doubt he anticipated the power and sway of Robespierre, and resolving, if possible, to crush his ambitious views, asserted, that it was the design of those confederates to make Robespierre dictator. With such seeming plausibility and veracity he delivered this charge, that it was with the greatest difficulty Robespierre was permitted to plead for himself, as we shall have occasion to shew in our anecdotes of Robespierre. This evidently

dently accounts for Roberspierre's detestation of Danton. Danton, however, had sufficient cunning to conceal his animosity, though frequently the violence of his disposition would break forth.

" If there exists a man (says he) who wishes to rule despotically over the representatives of the people, his head shall fall as soon as he is unmasked. There exists, it is true, in the deputation of Paris, a man whose opinions are for the republican party, the same as those of Royon were for the aristocratical—that man is Marat. Excellent citizens, it is true, many carry their republican notions too far; but let not a whole deputation be accused on account of a few individuals; let us turn this discussion, therefore, to the advantage of the public. |

" It is highly necessary that we should pass a rigorous law against those who may attempt to destroy public liberty. Let us pass a law which may inflict the punishment of death on those who shall declare themselves in favour of a dictatorship or triumvirate; and after laying those bases which may secure the reign of equality, let us annihilate that party spirit which would ruin us. It is pretended that there are men among us who seem inclined to divide France: let us banish such absurd ideas, by denouncing the punishment of death against the authors of them. France ought to be one indivisible whole: it ought to have unity of representation. The citizens of Marseilles wish to unite with the citizens of Dunkirk; I move, therefore, that the punishment of death may be appointed for those that may attempt to destroy unity in France; and I propose that the National Convention would establish unity of representation and execution as the basis of the government which it is going to establish. The Austrians will hear of
this

this harmony not without shuddering, and I may then assure you that our enemies are dead men."

Danton was now highly applauded, while Robespierre was scarce permitted to speak a word; yet, with seeming impartiality and candour, Danton invited him to his defence, requesting him to speak, "as *good citizens* were present to hear him." Yet these good citizens, with all the bitterness imaginable, threw out the highest invectives against both Marat and Robespierre; their after-champions, as we shall shew hereafter.

On the subject of Savoy becoming one of the départements of France, M. Danton spoke as follows:

"I move that this proposition be referred to the Military and Diplomatic Committees. The principle of leaving conquered people and countries the right of choosing their own constitution, ought to be so far modified, that we should expressly forbid it. There must be no such toleration any where: it would be sufficient to endanger the general liberty; and I request that a committee may be established for the purpose of promoting a general insurrection among all people against tyrants."

Such violent strains could not fail of delighting an unhappy people, already devoted to sedition and corruption. The proposition was accordingly referred to the intended committees.

Danton still played his part with equal spirit and cunning. When it was proposed to invite the Ministers to remain in office, upon Philipeaux requesting the invitation might be extended to the Minister of Justice, Danton, with a look of disdain, replied, that he would refuse the invitation, because he was of an opinion that an invitation was unworthy of the dignity
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of the Convention. In animadverting on the ministry of Roland, he declared, " No person is more ready to do justice to Roland than I am ; but if you give him an invitation, give one also to Madame Roland ; for every one knows that Roland did not stand alone in his department. Since it is necessary that one should speak out freely, I must remind you, that there was a moment when confidence was so much destroyed that there was no ministry, and that Roland himself had an idea of quitting Paris. It is not possible that you can invite a citizen to remain in the ministry. It will perhaps be said that Roland is not a deputy ; but a letter from him has been read, wherein he announced that he was chosen, and requested that you would name some one to succeed him. He likewise reminded you of the services of a man who had been very useful to him. He mentioned Pache as a person proper to succeed him ; pay honour to his recommendation."

In this artful manner he insinuated that Roland intended to quit Paris, that he was under petticoat government, and displayed a want of firmness. Lafource, galled with those indications, observed, " It was of little importance whether the Minister Roland had an intelligent wife, who assisted him with her advice, or whether he did every thing of himself ; such reflections were therefore unworthy the talents of Danton."

When Danton dared, he could exclaim with as much bitterness as any in the Assembly : that he hated Marat he himself avowed when he accused him with Robespierre :

" It is time," says he, " to put an end to mistrust, and that the guilty should be punished as soon as they are discovered. I declare to the
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Convention—to the whole Republic—THAT I DETEST MARAT. I have experienced his temper, and know it to be *volcanic*, peevish, and unsocial; but there exists no faction, nor can any exist in a republican state. I will not deny that private revenge may have some share in the massacres committed at the prisons; but it is absolutely false that these murders were in consequence of any plot.”

About the beginning of October, Danton sent to the Convention the seals of the state in gold, with the maces which were carried by the mace-bearers of the chancery; whereupon it was decreed that these articles, as well as the sceptre of the *ci-devant* king, and other insignia of the like kind, should be broken and carried to the Mint.

It was Danton's turn to be President when General Dumourier, previous to his departure from Paris for the army, went to the Jacobins, and made the following speech:

“Citizens, brothers, and friends, you have begun a great epoch—you have torn to pieces the antient history of France, which offered nothing but the picture of despotism. A new æra rises out of this Revolution, which electrifies our armies, and which has given them the necessary courage to repulse superior force. We are not fatigued. Pain, misery, and hunger do not exhaust us; we are more courageous than ever. We shall render unto despots what they would have given us. Before the end of this month I hope to have sixty thousand men to save the people from slavery.”

Danton in his reply thus complimented the general:

“When Fayette, that vile eunuch of the Revolution,

volution, took flight, you had already served the Republic, by not despairing of its welfare—you rallied our brothers—you afterwards preserved with address the station that ruined the enemy—and you have deserved well of your country. A grand career is yet open to you—may the pique of the people destroy all tyrannic sway! and may aristocracy fall before the red bonnet, with which the society honours you!—Return afterwards and live among us, and your name shall figure in the grandest pages of our history.”

Enthusiasm and madness had now, in a great measure, taken possession of M. Danton, by which means his popularity increased; the infatuated people being as mad and as enthusiastic as himself. When the immediate trial of the unfortunate Louis XVI. and his family, were moved for by Bourbotte, upon Brissot's insinuating the necessity of delay, for fear of throwing every thing into confusion, till the decision of the people was made public, M. Danton thus expressed himself:

“ We seem to mistake the consequence of the people we have wisely adopted, which is, that the Constitution should be presented all together to the people for their acceptance. If this principle has been sanctioned, as the sole preserver of liberty; if it alone can maintain harmony, and guard us from hasty and inconsiderate decisions, why depart from it now? Because it is said, if you do not know the will of the people on the question of a Republic, you run the hazard of building a laborious superstructure on a chimerical basis; an objection specious, but futile. Be assured, that the Republic is already sanctioned by the people, by the army, and the genius of liberty. If it be ~~not~~ then allowed to doubt that France wills to be, and will

will eternally be a Republic ; let us apply ourselves only to framing a Constitution on this principle ; and when you shall have decreed it, when by the solemnity of your discussions you shall have (if I may be allowed the expression) decreed the public opinion, you will have a rapid acceptance of it, and the concurrence of all the parts of your government will guarantee its stability. Let us adhere to this principle, that the laws, such as they are, must be executed till other laws are substituted for them, as the only thing that can save us from perpetual anarchy, and the dissolution of the Republic."

These warm expressions so gratified the ears of his auditors, that Danton's opinion was unanimously adopted.

When information was brought from the council of the district of Ustaris, that considerable bodies of Spanish troops were in motion on the frontiers, and Meillan had delivered an account of the French force in that quarter, declaring, that from personal knowledge of the ground, he was convinced, that 4000 men could easily stop the progress of 15,000, Danton observed, that they had no connection with Spain but the family compact, which the Revolution of the 10th of August suppressed. He moved, therefore, that they should adjourn to an early sitting the question, " Whether they ought to put themselves in a state of defence against Spain, or attack her vigorously ?" An early sitting was accordingly decreed.

When Roland, Minister of the Home Department, presented a statement of his accounts, including an account of the secret expences, and requested that it might be read, which being done accordingly, it was further moved by a Member, that *every* Minister should be obliged, in the same manner,

manner, to give in an account of his secret expence ; Danton with his utmost eloquence opposed the motion.

“ This proposal,” cried he, “ cannot be admitted. The Executive Council, invested with the confidence of the nation, have incurred secret expences, which were thought necessary for the Revolution, but a statement of them cannot be published.”

After this Gaudet was elected President, and Danton, with others, was chosen Secretary.

Danton supported Buzot in his motion of “ Death to all Emigrants taken with arms in their hands, and perpetual banishment to all others ;” and added this further remark, “ When liberty is in danger, she thirsts for the blood of all who conspire against her ; but when triumphant—when she strikes terror into the souls of tyrants—humanity should take the place of revenge ; and the legislature should pass no laws, but such as are dispassionate and just. By the motion made to you this object is perfectly obtained : so much the more that you only perpetuate the punishment which the Emigrants, by flying from their country, imposed upon themselves.”

Thus supported the motion was carried, and accordingly the Convention decreed, “ That all the French, actually Emigrants, are banished for ever from the territory of the Republic ; and that all of them who shall return to it, in contempt of this law, shall be punished with death ; without, however, derogating from the former decree, which condemns French Emigrants, taken with arms in their hands, to the punishment of death.”

M. Danton, upon being made Secretary, moved that clerks should be appointed, not members of the Convention, to draw up the minutes under the inspection of the Secretaries; the employment of Secretaries as Clerks taking up too much of their time, and diverting their attention from affairs of more importance.

The Assembly passed to the order of the day on this proposition, and M. Danton resigned his place as one of the secretaries.

Danton was certainly the most bitter of all the Assembly against the unhappy and insulted king: when Valeze had brought in his charges against Louis XVI. a debate took place whether or not the report should be printed; Danton immediately rose up and exclaimed, "In my opinion the National Convention ought not to hesitate one moment to order the report to be printed, as well as all papers and opinions which may be presented to you respecting the trial of a *perjured and tyrannical King*. Every thing certainly has not been said which might have been said, to set aside the inviolability given by the constitution to Louis the last. The people also are inviolable; and if it can be proved that the *ci-devant* King has violated, betrayed, and endeavoured to ruin the nation, it is agreeable to the principles of eternal justice that he should be condemned."

These arguments having prevailed, the report was ordered to be printed.

When circumstances are duly considered, the rancour and malevolence of Danton and his colleagues against the King may be easily accounted for. Bertrand who had been Minister of the Marine, but at this time a refugee in England, imagined it would be of essential service to the King to expose to the Convention the private negotiations
that

that had passed between Louis and the leaders of both parties. Danton, no doubt, was greatly alarmed when these papers were sent, especially as they contained ample probats of his and Le Croix's intrigues, to conceal which, it behoved these men to expedite the fall of the King, and thereby bury in oblivion those clandestine proceedings in which they were so deeply concerned. As to the intrigues of the * Girondists, they were entirely exposed by Danton and others.

About this time Roberspierre was creeping into favour, and now M. Danton beheld him with a jealous eye: they continually disagreed in sentiments, and, contrary to Roberspierre's opinion, M. Danton deemed it very impolitic to propose the suppression of the salaries of the Roman Catholic Priests, since such a law, however wise and politic in itself, was opposed by prejudices.

When a motion was made for authorising visits and researches in all the houses of Paris, to discover the Emigrants and Loyalists, who flocked in for some time in vast numbers, Danton observed that the visits in houses resembled the bill of that Parliament in England, and therefore rejected the measure. He invited the Convention to dismiss Roland from the ministry, not, he remarked, that he has bad intentions, but he has an acrimony of temper very dangerous in a place almost equal to that of Consul, and in which a conciliating character is the virtue most requisite.

He also invited the Convention to divide the functions of the War Minister, and thus to dimi-

* A full and satisfactory account of these intrigues may be seen in General Dumourier's Memoirs, just published by Allen and West, No. 15. Pater-Noster-Row.

nish a load too heavy for the Minister Pache, who, he said, was a good patriot, but had not that vast lively conception, so necessary to provide for the subsistence of six hundred thousand men under arms : likewise he invited the Convention to make the war the object of its attention, and to provide for it without parsimony.

“ Citizens, cries he, you have nothing to fear from the whole world, with French armies well cloathed and well fed : yes, such is the energy of the French soldiers, that should you say to three thousand men, you must die or go to Vienna ! those three thousand men would march to death, or to Vienna ! ”

Danton moved that the Commissioners should have full power to tax the rich, against whom their vengeance should be directed, with whatever they should deem necessary to support the war ; this was accordingly decreed, the whole assembly having risen at once, as a sign of their adherence to it. Three days after he proposed the following decree :

“ No corps, armed and paid by the Republic shall disband itself, unless orders be given that it be replaced ; and every citizen that shall quit his colours, without being replaced, shall suffer death.”

This was also adopted.

When Gaston complained of the Committee of Public Safety, in not having reported upon Bourdeaux, Danton vindicated the Committee, and said that it ought to combine political stratagems with revolutionary measures—

“ You ought (said he) to profit even by the vices of your enemies. Gold alone can revive the public spirit, which is expiring in some places ; gold is the nerve of all measures, three millions well
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laid out might have saved Toulon, and hanged all the traitors. Had the same measures been adopted with regard to Lyons, had the Sans Culottes been indemnified, we should not have been reduced to the hard necessity of bombarding our own cities: we ought not to mind ten, twenty, thirty, nay a hundred, or even two hundred millions when the salvation of liberty is the question. I move that the Committee of Public Welfare do make a report respecting the exigencies of the Republic, and the means it wants for the execution of the measures which it has proposed." This was immediately adopted. It was then decreed that the Committee of Public Safety should be augmented to the number of nine. Danton was invited, but he peremptorily refused to make one of them.

Danton likewise proposed to annul all arbitrary taxes imposed by the representatives of the people, the administrative bodies, or revolutionary committees. This was decreed, and Gennissieux complained at not having seen it in the minutes. He demanded that it should be fully executed, and it was accordingly adopted.

We find Danton and Lacroix as Commissioners from the National Convention, when Dumourier was employed in the war, on the 20th of March. They arrived in the camp, and were requested by the General to go to Louvain, where he would meet them in the evening. Danton appeared exceedingly hurt at the defeat of the army, and regretted in strong terms the desertion of the troops. Assisted by La Croix, he urged, with all possible energy, the intention of their arrival, which was to insist upon the General's revoking the sentiments of a letter dated March 12, by which he had offended the Convention; the General, however, positive-

ly denied to retract any part thereof, whereupon these men, Danton especially, made use of every persuasive argument, but in vain; for after all, they could only get an evasive reply, with which they were obliged to depart contented.

It is difficult to say how Danton felt himself on Marat's assassination; were we to judge by his sentiments on a former occasion, it is impossible he could be *very* sorry for the death of a man he *bated*. But according to his usual cunning, he disguised his feelings, seeming to approve of the honours that were paid to his memory, and to all appearance, *grieving* as much for his loss, as he *rejoiced* for that of Brissot.

In conformity with the rest, who continued their attacks against religion, with equal fury and obstinacy, as against their other enemies, Danton, now Member of the section of the *Champs Elysees*, addressed the following discourse to the French Legislators, which is sufficient to fill with horror, all those who retain any sense of religion and morality. —A brief abstract, it is presumed, will convince the reader of its blasphemous tendency.

“ Every Mediator between man and the Divinity is perfect quackery.

“ All revealed religion is a human invention, in its principle it is imposture, and in its effects, a series of superstition.

“ Of all superstitions, the Catholick religion is the greatest; it also appears the least compatible with reason and liberty, because it absorbs the whole soul, and enslaves all its faculties.

“ Some of its dogmas are absurd, and others of them cruel and barbarous.

“ Its morality is almost wholly exaggerated; in many points it is opposite to the imprescriptible law
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of nature, and the good order of society ; in others, it is impossible to be practised ; consequently, tyrannical to those wretches who were obliged to do so : whatever is praise-worthy belongs to natural religion.

“ The Supreme Being has no other temple but the universe.

“ All men are his priests, and all honest hearts his altars. Virtuous actions are the only practice and sacrifices which please him : his law has only one precept, which is this—be happy without injuring your fellow creatures, and do to others what you would that they should do to you.

“ With such ideas, which may be called religion, or what one pleases, there is no occasion for any other morality than that which nature inspires.”

These *wise* and *wholesome* politicks were highly applauded by the Convention, but as the proverb hints, that the *Devil will frequently forsake his own*, so Danton, who was thus followed, is at last forsaken by his *bellish* crew ! he now absented himself from the assembly, and various were the reports which were propagated as the occasion ; those to his disadvantage were chiefly fabricated by Robespierre, who though immoral, and mad as himself, yet owed him a secret grudge. Amongst the senseless rumours of the Jacobin writers, it was stated that Danton was gone on a secret embassy to the Court of Prussia, and many sage speculations were made on the probability that republican artifice or republican *bribery* would have a material influence with the Prussian Monarch. The judicious, however, treated this idle report with the contempt which it merited, being fully persuaded that Danton knew better than to venture beyond the frontiers of the Gallic Republic, particularly upon so

ridiculous a project as that imagined by the Jacobin writers. Others, with greater reason indeed, concluded that like Thomas Paine he was hid in some *miserable hole* in order to avoid the storm which now overwhelmed so many of the Convention, and which, instead of abating its violence, threatened to break upon other wretched victims with additional fury. Danton would no more have appeared in other countries, if unavoidable, than the infamous out-law Thomas Paine dare revisit old England, which his diabolical tenets were employed to overturn and ruin. However, it soon appeared that Danton had been indisposed, or pretended to have been so, after his return from Belgium, when he presented himself to the tribune in the Convention, and received the congratulations of his brother murderers.

The meeting between him and Roberfpierre was truly farcical--after upbraiding, chiding, and so forth, they commended each other's abilities, shook hands and embraced! A deputation of citizens from *Havre de Grace* having stated that several fugitive royalists sought refuge in the department of Lower Seine, attempting to excite rebellion, requested that the revolutionary army, with the *guillotine*, should be sent there. The revolutionary army wears a black uniform with red facings and cuffs, and a blood coloured and red striped standard, which standard is planted before every house that is to be searched. The master of the house is then obliged to give a most exact account of himself and of his estate, and the army carries off all the property which he thinks fit for the service of the army of the Republic, and frequently the proprietor himself. This request of the deputation from Havre was seconded by another citizen in the same sitting, who added, that
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Pitt had concerted a plot to seize that port : on this occasion, Danton said that the people had a right to assemble in popular societies, without the permission of the Convention, or of the Minister. He was now interrupted by Coupe, amidst the loudest murmurs of the Tribune.—Danton, however, acting his part with superlative skill, wept, or *pretended to weep*, while his voice faltered in attempting to vindicate his patriotism, which was finally accomplished by Roberspierre ; when the Tribunes applauded the President, gave Danton the civic kifs, whereupon he grew in favour as much as ever.

Roberspierre, who ere this was rather shy in defending *his friend* Barrere in the Jacobin club, now stood resolutely forward in vindication of *his enemy* Danton : what could have been *Citizen* Roberspierre's reason ? except he was apprehensive that *Citizen* Barrere, notwithstanding all his fine plans for the salvation and prosperity of the Republic, was going to have his reward at the guillotine ; and dreading a similar recompence for his services, he now took shelter behind Danton !

The expected warfare between Danton and Roberspierre having terminated in the *fraternal embrace* and *civic kifs*, it may probably be inferred that the whole of this pretended hospitality was no more than a mere pretext to blind the million, while in reality they were confederates in policy as well as in guilt ; there is no doubt, but that they actually had a difference arising from the rivalry of ambition, in order to obtain the supremacy of favour ; for men, like these, are ever jealous of each other—but then wisely conceiving that the contest might terminate in the destruction of both, these *enemies* united like *friends* to support each other ! nor was Danton less favourable to Roberspierre, who declared in the
Convention

Convention that the people ought to have full confidence in the Committees of Public Safety and welfare, as the only means of saving the Republic: hitherto they succeeded to the utmost of their expectations, carrying all their measures in triumph; Danton being the person of most consequence in the Convention next to Roberespierre.

When the Commons of Paris were admitted to the bar, and the President had read an address, declaring the late existence of a horrible conspiracy—its happy detection—their present security, and the congratulations of all the good people of Paris, concluding with an exhortation to remain firm to their post—Danton thus expressed himself—

“ The National Convention being supported by the people, will counteract every plot; the last has been completely averted, and the Convention and the people will take care that all the conspirators be brought to punishment. The decree proposed by Bourdon is not sufficient. We must rely on the Committees, and not impede their march; they are as the advanced guard of our political movements, and their motions must be confined with the great body of our armies. Fear nothing, Frenchmen: never was the Republic so great and glorious! This is the time appointed for its triumph! men will now judge for what they are made, distinctions will no longer impose upon them. I am convinced that the great majority of the Members who compose the Council General of the Commons of Paris are ardent patriots. I demand that all citizens who have any thing to disclose and propose, relative to the new conspiracy, do concert with the Committees of Public and General Safety, who will give an account thereof as soon as possible. Let us all pronounce our wills to do so: I myself,

myself, against whom aristocracy and moderatism have made such malignant efforts, will exert my utmost : I who proffered to you the Revolutionary Government, which you adopted, and which adds to all the promptitude of other governments the frankness of liberty. But let us seek to serve the Republic. I demand that every thing be referred to the Committees of Public and General Safety."

After this, Danton moved that the Committee of Public Safety should present a plan of a national journal, in which all the sittings should be exact, and in which the speakers might depend upon seeing their speeches judiciously represented.

The triumph of Danton was too great to last long ; no wonder then his career should meet a sudden termination, especially among men whose daily efforts were tending to exterminate each other. Danton, with three others, were arrested March 30, 1794, by order of the Committees. The succeeding day, Legendre expressed great surprise at finding these men, especially the celebrated Danton, in custody—

" If they be guilty (says he) I will be the first to call for their punishment, but you ought to hear them : I am pure, and I believe Danton to be the same—"

Being now interrupted by noise, he feared (he said) that private animosities were going to sacrifice men who had rendered great services to the Revolution. He spoke of his own connections with Danton, of what Danton had done when Minister of Justice in 1792, and concluded with moving, that the Deputies arrested last night should be heard at the bar. This motion was applauded by several, but Fayau remarked that there ought to be no exception to general rules ; " Men should be tried
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by the whole of their conduct, not by their conduct at particular periods. The Committees were bound to report the causes of arrest within twenty four hours," and therefore he moved that the parties arrested should not be heard.

Robespierre, whose long smothered enmity against his rival now took full vent, resolved to seize this favourable opportunity of crushing at once his powerful competitor, who, he well knew, if ever he had *him* under his foot, would trample him to pieces without delay and without mercy: accordingly he seconded Fayau, leaving it to the assembly to consider well, whether certain men shall be more powerful than their country. He could not conceive why some individuals now applauded this motion, which was rejected when made by Danton in favour of Chabot and Bazire. He did not regard the eulogies which people bestowed on themselves and their friends. He did not wish to know what a man has done at this or that period, but what has been his conduct during the whole of his political career. He remarked, that all that is said of Danton might likewise be urged in favour of Brissot, Hebert, and Chabot, who were, at certain periods, the defenders of liberty. He did not know why Danton should be allowed a privilege which was denied to his companion Fabre d'Eglantine.

"Attempts," added he, "are made to alarm you on the abuse of power. What have you done, which you have not done freely—which has not contributed to the salvation of your country—which has not drawn down upon you the blessings of the people? It is feared, forsooth, that individuals may be sacrificed! Do you then distrust that justice which constitutes the people's hope?

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I declare that whoever trembles at this crisis is guilty. Me too they have tried to intimidate. The friends of Danton have written, that if Danton be overthrown, I must perish under the strokes of the aristocrats. They have imagined that connections might induce me to divert the course of justice. What signified to me the dangers that may threaten? my life is my country's; my heart is free from reproach, and above all, fear. I was also the friend of Petion—of Roland—of Brissot—they betrayed their country, and I declared against them. Danton wishes to take their place. Danton, in my eyes, is only the enemy of his country. The guilty are not so numerous as they would have us believe: the most guilty are those who would raise up idols and domineers. To propose a course with some Members not allowed in behalf of others, is an insult to liberty. The cause of the guilty can be pleaded only by their accomplices."

Barrere, who succeeded Roberespierre, joined in opinion with him, remarking that the Convention should justly be esteemed an aristocratic senate, if the Deputies arrested were to be heard at the bar. Such versatility of principle, he added, would be a direct censure of all their former proceedings. It was therefore decreed, "that the parties arrested should not be heard."

St. Just, in the names of the Committees of Public Safety and General Welfare, reported on all the conspiracies that have successively agitated the Republic, and all had for their object to restore royalty, and annihilate liberty. Hebert, he represented the partizan of royalty, who appeared on the political horizon, and, to deceive the people, addressed them in a gross language. Fabre
 . d'Eglantine,

d'Eglantine, the panegyrist of d'Orleans, he called a supple man, insinuating, cunning, laborious, speaking every tongue, flattering all the passions, tender of every party, subtle, a nice observer and prophesier of events, and one who obtained the esteem of all, touching their passions, as a musician tries, listens to, and determines the effect of the notes of his composition. As to Danton, he railed at his pretended patriotism, having, he said, conspired with Mirabeau, Dumourier, Herbert, and Herault.

" You fought," says he, " the protection of Mirabeau, and during his life you remained mute. This faction-monger knew the value of your audacity, and displayed against the court a menacing front. He perished, and his death again plunged you into obscurity. You appeared again in the Champ de Mars; and it was then that in the Jacobins you supported the motion of La Clos, and drew up, with Brissot, the celebrated address. You soon after, however, contrived to enjoy tranquillity at Arcis-sur-Aube; but on the night of the 10th of August you returned, and it required all the persuasion of your friends to keep you out of bed. When Minister of Justice you were surrounded by knaves; and speaking of Noel, one of your agents, you observed that you knew him to be a good-for-nothing fellow; but that you had him watched. Upon Fabre d'Eglantine you heaped riches, and it was by your influence that both he and d'Orleans were chosen for the Convention. In this Convention you were the friend of the *Brissotines*, with whom you concerted sham attacks to be made one yourself; and while they demanded your accounts, you presented to them the olive-branch of peace. You talked of
your

your indolence ; but you well knew how to shake it off in the defence of Dumourier and Westermann. Dumourier, Danton, Fabre Fona, Fabre d'Eglantine, and Lacroix, are all of the same political faith, and of the same faction."

After railing against the characters of Danton's chosen friends, he thus attacks that of Danton himself :

" You, Danton, with external looks disguised your internal feebleness. You began like the thunder ; but you never made a vigorous proposition against the Federalists. You seemed energetic, but your energy was false ; and if in the month of March 1793, on your return from Belgium, you caused a ferment in Paris ; if you excited an insurrection, it was to enable Dumourier to march to the capital with his army. Like Sextus Quintus, you pretended simplicity ; but flashes of light soon dazzled the political tortoise, and made you appear a veryameleon, giving a diversity of colours to your crimes."

Thus upbraided, he was in a state of accusation with the following Deputies : Camille, Desmoulins, Herault, Philippeaux, and Lacroix ; being convicted of having plotted with d'Orleans, Dumourier, Fabre d'Eglantine, and other enemies of the Republic ; and of having shared in the conspiracy, which tended to re-establish monarchy, and to destroy the national representation, as well as the republican government. They were accordingly to be tried with Fabre d'Eglantine.

The triumph of Danton being over, a melancholy termination succeeded. Some short time after, St. Just, having made a report on the present circumstances of affairs, said, that the wife of Camille Desmoulins had received money to
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cause the patriots and the Revolutionary Tribunal to be massacred. He compared the situation of the Convention to that of the Roman Senate, and afterwards proposed the following decree:

"The Revolutionary Tribunal shall continue the proceedings against Danton and others implicated in the same conspiracy."

Previous to this decree being passed, Billaud Varennes demanded the Convention should hear the reading of the following letter, received by the Committee from the administration of Police:

"Commune of Paris, April 4."

"We, administrators of the department of police, in consequence of a letter received from the keeper of the Luxembourg prison, went thither, where there appeared before us, citizen La Flotte, formerly minister of the republic at Florence, who declared to us, that being in the chamber of Arthur Dillon the preceding evening, the latter told him, that Danton, Lacroix, and others, had that day declared before the Revolutionary Tribunal, that they would answer no questions but in the presence of Robespierre, Barrere, and St. Just, their accusers; that the people were much pleased with this determination; that the jury was embarrassed how to proceed; and that it was feared the committee of public safety would order all the prisoners to be massacred for fear they should create an insurrection. Dillon added, that he had concerted means with Simon to bribe the keepers; that the wife of Desmoulins was to distribute 1000 crowns to the mob to surround the Revolutionary Tribunal; and, in short, that a popular insurrection was to be excited, in order to release the prisoners. La Flotte added, that Dillon wished very much that he should enter into this conspiracy."

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This declaration was signed by La Flotte, after which the decree proposed by St. Just was adopted.

Danton and the rest made a long defence on the 4th, and the next day Couthon thus addressed the Convention :

“ We are here to give you some particulars respecting what happened yesterday before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where Vadier and I were present without being seen. The conspirators said, that nothing was more glorious than to conspire against a government which conspires. Danton even had the audacity to fling little balls in the face of the judges. Meanwhile Simon, Thouret, and Dillon, in the prison of the Luxembourg, escorted by their military fellow-prisoners, were waiting the moment to break their chains, to seize the avenues to the Committees of Public Welfare and General Safety, to butcher their Members, and to inflict the same barbarity on the patriots of Paris and on the Revolutionary Tribunal; then taking the son of Capet from the Temple, they were to have put him into the arms of Danton, who was to present to the people their new despot.”

The proceedings against Danton and the rest of the accused Deputies having lasted three days, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal read the decree of the Convention, which ordains the closure of all proceedings, if the jury should declare themselves satisfied with a discussion of three days.

The jury accordingly declared, that they would retire to their apartment to deliberate on a verdict. When Danton and the rest heard what the jury had answered, they grew quite riotous and refractory, and insisted on being heard: Danton in particular was very violent and abusive; Westermann

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was

was also turbulent. The President of the Tribunal, therefore, ordered that the delinquents should be taken from the bar and carried back to their dungeon.

Soon after the jury returned into court, and declared that they were sufficiently satisfied with the evidence which had been given.

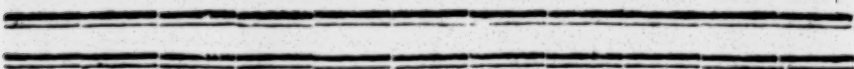
The Public Accuser now reminded the jury of the audacity and impudence which the accused, particularly Danton, had manifested all the while their trials lasted. He recapitulated the outrageous insults committed by them against national justice, and the grins, railleries, and threats, which they had made during the whole of the proceedings. He also reminded the jury of the decree which the Convention had passed, respecting the treatment of those who should insult the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The tribunal, with due deference to the remarks of the Public Accuser, then passed death upon Danton and twelve others, who were ordered for execution the same day.

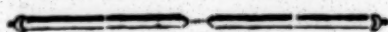
Danton, since the time he was arrested, well knew his fate was inevitable. The sentence, therefore, made no apparent impression upon his mind; on the contrary, he defied them, even in the hour of death, and prepared for the execution without the least visible regret. On Saturday, April 5, at five o'clock, the condemned persons were conveyed in three carts, from the Conciergerie, to the Place de la Revolution. Danton, with Chabot, Lacroix, Fabre d'Eglantine, and Herault de Sechelles, were in the first cart. Danton was executed last, and though a spectator of the mournful exits of his fellow sufferers, who all died (except Lacroix) with uncommon intrepidity, his countenance never changed,

changed ; and when it came to his turn, shewing the utmost contempt of death, he resigned himself to the fatal guillotine, without once murmuring. During the executions there was not the least disturbance.

Danton was strong made and robust, inclining to corpulency. He was certainly possessed of great talents, which he as certainly abused. Knowing the characters of those he had united with, he was as great a knave as any, but not the least sign of cowardice (which is the chief characteristic of his principal accusers) did he ever betray. He was brave to the very last, and, we are sorry to add, brave even in guilt ! But his immorality may in a great measure be attributed to the now contagious blasphemy of his abandoned countrymen. Danton was master of much eloquence, but when once roused to anger, his epithets were bitter ; as appears in the conclusion of his life. It is said that Roberespierre was so alarmed with the sarcasm and gall of his reproaches, that he was agitated for a long time, even after Danton was removed from his presence. The fall of Danton and Roberespierre, tho' once triumphant, is a convincing proof of the instability of *French popularity*. We may anticipate the same fate of their accusers ; but the only thing that remains a doubt is, who of the present wretched demagogues will have to close the scene !



A N E C D O T E S
O F
M. R O B E R S P I E R R E,
WHO WAS GUILLOTINED JULY 28, 1794.



BEFORE we begin to detail the proceedings of the National Convention on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of July last, and the execution of Roberespierre the following day, it will be proper to relate some particulars relative to that celebrated character previous to that period.

On the first beginning of the disturbances of France, Roberespierre, as we have observed before, was held in the greatest contempt. He and his party were accused of aiming at the dictatorship; Roberespierre was hereupon obliged to use every powerful argument in his defence; to remind the citizens of past services, notwithstanding he afterwards observed, in the cases of Brissot, Danton, &c. that the *whole*, and not a *part* of a man's conduct should be considered. Thus he expatiates on his own services—

“ Citizens, it is doubtless difficult to give an answer to an accusation which is not precise, and to reply to the most vague and chimerical imputations ;

tions ; I shall, however, observe that my whole conduct gives the lie to the calumnies of my enemies. It was I, who in the Constituent Assembly combated, for three years, every faction—It was I who opposed the court, disdained its presents, and despised the caresses of the most seducing party, who under the masque of patriotism had conspired together to oppress liberty.—”

Being now interrupted, he complained with the greatest warmth of the hooting and noise which prevented him from speaking—“ shall I not then have a right, said he, of telling you that the reports which you from time to time hear, are insidiously directed to one end—that of oppressing the patriots ?”

“ The patriots” echoing some of the members, “ *the VILLAINS !*” upon which the tumult and noise were redoubled, and Roberespierre attacked even the President. Louvet was Roberespierre’s chief accuser. “ He had watched narrowly, he said, the conduct of Roberespierre, especially since the month of January last (1792) ; during that month a set of people were admitted into the Jacobin club, who had never before been seen there. These people formed a system of ambition, which they concealed under the mask of extravagant popularity, and they endeavoured to calumniate the best patriots, and to render them odious by the speeches which they delivered in the club : these men wished to ascribe to themselves the whole honour of the Revolution of the 10th of August, though it was not accomplished by them—It was they who planned and directed the execution of those dreadful scenes which made the streets of Paris run with blood during the first week of September, and which still excite horror in the most distant departments.

ments. It was they who despised, vilified, and prosecuted the Legislative assembly—it was they who came to the bar to demand decrees, and who threatened they would cause the alarm-bell to be sounded in Paris, if their request was refused—it was Roberespierre who introduced into the Electoral Assembly of Paris, that Marat, *whose name I cannot pronounce without horror*—it was Roberespierre that dragged *that monster* from the den in which he was concealed, into public notice—it was Roberespierre and Marat who polluted with frightful bills all the walls of the capital, and when the latter excited the people to massacre all the Ministers, he excepted none but Danton, who will find it a difficult matter, on account of this exception, to justify himself in the eye of posterity—it was these men who were the authors of that dreadful consternation into which Paris was thrown for a long time—it was they who came to request that the people might be prevented from committing murder—Heavens! prayers were vain, and when a mother supplicated for the life of a beloved son, a wife for that of a fond husband, both were inhumanly butchered! These bloody men wished to satiate their eyes with the horrid spectacle of 28,000 bodies sacrificed to their fury! He accused Roberespierre of having long calumniated the best patriots, calumniated them when their calumnies were sentences of death. He accused him of having dispersed and persecuted the Legislative Assembly; of having exhibited himself as an object of idolatry; of having aimed at supreme power.”

Roberespierre, previous to his defence, remarked that the members who interrupted him supposed that he ought simply to answer the question, “whether

ther or no he ever proposed a Dictatorship or a Triumvirate?"

"Should I answer, says he, by a simple negative, I should do nothing; I maintain that I am not accused, but that this accusation is a crime; it is not made with a view only to ruin me, but likewise to ruin the public cause."

As several in the Assembly now scoffed and derided him, he desired that those who answered him by laughing and murmuring, would unite against him, and that if this small tribunal would pronounce his condemnation, that day would be the most glorious of his life!

"Yes (exclaimed he, with much warmth) it was absurd to accuse me, since not contented with having discharged, like a true patriot, the duties which my constituents imposed upon me, I even resigned every thing that could be considered as the reward of my patriotism. The best answer to vague accusations is to prove that one has always acted entirely contrary; instead of being ambitious, I have always combated the ambitious ——"

This by the bye is a very lame argument, for every ambitious man will naturally endeavour to crush the ambition of others, lest it interfere with, and consequently tend to baffle his own wishes.

"But (continued Roberspierre) I have said too much on this pitiful accusation; let me now advert to the two propositions which have been made. The first, which decrees the punishment of death against any person who may propose a Dictatorship or a Triumvirate, cannot be opposed but by those who have formed a plan for getting all places into their hands, as well as guiding the opinions of the people, or who may think themselves sure of being guided by foreign powers. Another proposition is,

that of declaring that the French Republic can form only one state. What difficulty is there then in such a declaration? is not the necessity of the unity of the Republic perfectly apparent? are there two opinions on this point? let us declare, therefore, that the French Republic will form only one state, subject to uniform and constitutional laws. It is only the certainty of the strongest union between all the parts of France that can furnish us with the means of repelling our enemies with vigour and success. I move, therefore, that these propositions, as simple as natural, may be immediately adopted, and that the affair which relates to me may be thoroughly examined."

A long debate now ensued respecting a declaration said to have been made by M. Panis, to two of the confederates of Marseilles, that *the virtuous Roberespierre was to be the Dictator of France*.

In answer to Louvet's accusations, Roberespierre, on the day appointed for his justification, thus argued—

" I have been accused in the National Convention, and now appear to answer to the charges made against me : it is pretended that I have had the ambition to aspire at being a Dictator, a Triumvirate, or a Tribune. My accuser is not certain which of these titles I wish to enjoy, but let us unite them all under the denomination of *supreme power*. If this was a criminal project, it certainly was a bold one ; to accomplish it, nothing less was necessary than to overturn the throne, to abolish the Legislature, and prevent the calling of a National Convention : if, however, it can be proved, that by my speeches, spoken or printed, I myself advised the calling of a National Convention, and if it can be proved that I was then accused by the same persons, as an incendiary,

incendiary, what will become of that accusation? it is likewise certain, that making myself master of Paris would not have been sufficient; the departments must also have been secured, but where were my treasures and my armies? what public places had I at my disposal? were they not all in the hands of my adversaries? Had I conceived such a project, ought I not to have been considered as a fool, and does not my adversary shew his great sense in having taken the trouble to compose such fine speeches, and to cause such elegant bills to be pasted up, for the purpose of making me appear to all France, a formidable enemy—

“ Louvet accuses me of being connected with Marat, of having brought him forward to be a deputy, of having calumniated Priestley, and ruled the electoral assembly. To all this I shall only oppose facts. It was agreed by the electoral assembly, that elections should be revised by the Primary Assemblies, and this decree was carried into execution: another measure adopted by the Electoral Assembly, with a view to destroy intrigue, was, that the election of Deputies should be made by open vote, after the merits of the candidates had been discussed. During one of these discussions, in which I had no further part than the other members of the Electoral Assembly, I thought it my duty to make some general observations on Priestley, whom I know no further than as a man of letters, and whose opinions only I could discuss; I marked out Marat, the author of *the crimes of kings*, and several other patriotic writers, and certainly no one expected at that moment that the name of Marat would be sufficient to calumniate the Electoral Primary Assemblies of Paris; but were not my love for liberty, and my struggles for its support, sufficient

to furnish arms to my adversaries, without uniting my cause to that of Marat, whose excesses I sometimes blamed?

" Louvet divides the remainder of his accusation against me in two parts: he reproaches me with my conduct in the Jacobin club, and in the council general of the Commons; he says in the former, I exercised a despotism of opinion. I know not what despotism of opinion is, unless it be the empire of truth, but this empire does not belong to any individual; it belongs to all who defend the principles of universal reason: he says that the Jacobins have degenerated since the month of January, but since that period, that foreign powers have declared war against them. Louvet treats them as a faction of villains—what is the truth? that this *bandful of villains* have pulled down despotism, while Louvet and his friends were too prudent, and too fond of good order to engage in such plans. The Jacobins did not relish his opinions—the public relished them as little; in this they doubtless acted wrong, but why should he endeavour to engage the National Convention to avenge an affront offered to *his* vanity. He has accused the whole society; I shall not make any answer in their name; I shall wait till he moves for their destruction, and we shall then see whether he will be more successful than Leopold and La Fayette.

" Let me now examine the reproaches thrown out against me, regarding my conduct in the Council General of the Commons. I accepted, it is said, the office of Municipal Officer, though I had abdicated that of Public Accuser. This is true; times were changed. It has been said that the Council of the Commons was previously destined

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to accomplish great things—they have performed them—they have overturned tyranny, and saved France. The Council was composed of men whose elevated souls disdained monarchical baseness—they may be insulted, but the remembrance of them will live for ever. The petty sons of faction soon vanish, but great characters remain. We know not the names of those who insulted Cato, and posterity prostrates itself before the image of that great man.

“ I now hasten to the events of the second of September. Those who say that I had any part in them are people extremely prejudiced, or extremely malevolent. I had given up frequenting the Council of the Commons long before the second of September; and if Louvet had accused myself only, I should have returned no answer, but he has accused the whole Council. The Council of the Commons wished to prevent the events of the second of September, but they were not able, and I will tell you why. Those who have said that there is no analogy between the Revolution of the tenth of August and that of the second of September, deceive you. On the tenth of August, a great number of patriots perished; the principal conspirators were saved from the fury of the triumphant people, and imprisoned. The Criminal Tribunal put to death on the scaffold some inferior conspirators; but Montmorin was acquitted, De Poix escaped, and the patriots wounded on the day of the tenth, were dying in the arms of their friends. The news of the surrender of Verdun, and of the march of the Combined armies, produced a sudden alarm in Paris. The Ministers came to the National Assembly and explained the danger of France: the Council of the Commons saw it, and were of opinion that
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all Paris ought to rise to avert it. Immediately the *toctin* was founded, and 40,000 men were raised in a few hours. These new defenders of their country were ready to hasten to the frontiers, but before they departed, they remembered that the conspirators were still alive—vengeance and fear inflamed their minds—they ran to the prisons, and a general massacre took place. The Municipal Officers were then obliged to discharge a melancholy, but necessary duty, to prevent the innocent from being confounded with the guilty. Since that period the events of the second of September have excited a kind of general horror; but did not the Minister for the Home Department boast of the prudence and justice of the people? and did not Louvet himself begin one of his bills with the following words, ‘*honour to the Council of the Commons, they caused the toctin to be founded—they have saved France?*’ If people will lament, let them lament the patriots massacred by despotism.—I am always suspicious of that sensibility which is exclusively excited by the fate of the enemies of the State. Louvet has accused me of having also vilified the Legislative Assembly—by this he shews that he has a very poor idea of its dignity. No, it is impossible to vilify the Representatives of the people. He says, I threatened to the Assembly that the *toctin* should be founded, if they did not agree to a proposal I had made. In answer to this, I must observe, that I was going on that day to present a petition at the head of a deputation from the Commons, and this is what has been called commanding decrees. With regard to the imputed threats, I absolutely deny them—Lacroix, to whom I am accused of having addressed them, is doubtless mistaken.”

Robespierre

Robespierre now, hearing some murmurs in the house, brought his speech to a speedy conclusion, wishing that private hatred might be forgotten, and liberty still be supported. The speech was ordered to be printed, and Robespierre was now acquitted by a majority of the Convention.

Robespierre still continued, with Chabot and others, strongly to oppose all the measures which were recommended by Danton and his party : notwithstanding they professed a very great regard for each other, and whenever drawn into disputation, avoided all unguarded expressions.

This extraordinary character was rather plain in his person, and possess'd none of those marking features that in general indicate ambitious minds. He affected the utmost simplicity in his dress, his lodgings, and general expences : he usually wore the same coat two years, and resided at M. Duplai's, a carpenter, with all the plainness of a stoic philosopher. This affectation of simplicity and plainness was undoubtedly to contradict the supposition of his being ambitious, which has been prevalent ever since the accusations of Louvet. In his mind he was naturally timid, and was supported in his tyrannies and massacres by the daring spirit of his colleagues. He had his spies in every corner of the capital, went cased in armour, and was never without a dozen or fourteen men to protect him. He had his victuals tasted for him before he ate them, was afraid ever to have his shirt washed but in his presence, and went armed constantly with pistols.

We shall now give a detail of the proceedings of the National Convention on the memorable 28th of July and the three preceding days, which will form a remarkable epoch in the French Revolution.

Particulars

*Particulars of the late important Transactions which
have taken place in Paris, relative to*
**ROBERSPIERRE, COUTHON, AND OTHER
DEPUTIES.**

In order to give a more clear idea of events, it will be necessary to give an account of the proceedings of the National Convention on the 25th and the two succeeding days.

BARRERE on the 25th of July, having announced that the army of the Sambre and the Meuse were marching to Liege, presented a report in the name of the Committees of Public and General Safety, in which, "after stating that liberty would annihilate the authors of the new plot, he entered into a reply of those misled citizens, who expressed a desire that a second 31st of May should take place. In this reply he drew a comparison between the present prosperous situation of France, and the disastrous state in which the different factions had involved the country." His speech was received with loud applause.

ROBERSPIERRE on the 26th ascended the Tribune; he pronounced a long discourse concerning the Revolutionary Government, and replied to those who had reproached him with a wish to aspire to the Dictatorship; he asserted that these reproaches had become more violent and virulent since he had supported the existence of a Supreme Being, which support had displeased the successors of Danton and Hebert.

He then proceeded to expose the falsehood of these reports; circulated in the Convention, and throughout Paris, that he had proposed in the Committee of Public Safety to arrest thirty members. He concluded by some observations on the state of the Republic. "The Committees of Public and General Safety are the columns of liberty,

berty, but the majority of the members are oppressed. The decree against the English has *in no one instance been carried into execution*. The system of Dumounez has been revived in Belgium: the trees of liberty have been replanted; the artillerymen have been sent away from Paris, and attempts have been made to mislead you with respect to the situation of the Republic. The Committees must be permitted to act, but they must be watched, and the Convention must be invested with all that dignity which is consistent with its character and its functions."

VADIER complained that Roberspierre, in his speech, attacked the report which he made on Catherine Theos.

ROBERSPIERRE declared, that he had not heard any attack made on the reporter of that matter.

VADIER replied, that the business respecting the pretended Mother of God, was of greater importance than was generally imagined.—This impostor carried on a correspondence with Pitt, the Duchess of Bourbon, Bergasse, and others.

On the 27th, after several petitioners had been heard at the bar, St. Just appeared in the Tribune.

"I am of no faction—I hate all factions—your Committees of Public and General Safety have ordered me to present a report to you on the apparent corruption of the public opinion.—But I will speak only to you, and I will speak only in my own name."

ST. JUST was prevented from proceeding by exclamations of indignation against him.

TALLIEN obtained leave to speak—"St. Just has began by informing you that he is of no party. I belong only to the Party of Truth. Yesterday a Member of the Government, (Roberspierre) thought proper to make an insolated report; to-day another Member addresses you in his own name,

name, and on his own account.—Alas! what Citizen can refrain from tears when he contemplates the miseries of his country!”

BILLAUD VARENNES—“ You will shudder with horror when you hear that the armed force of Paris is committed to the armed hands of Parricides. Henriot you remember was denounced by the Revolutionary Tribunal as the accomplice of Hebert. From the punishment which he deserved, he was rescued by the power of one man.—Who is that man, you will ask?—Roberspierre is the man.

“ LVALETTE, one of the chiefs of the armed force, and the only Noble who has been retained in a military capacity, sharpened the poignards that were to massacre the Deputies—who was his protector?—Roberspierre was his protector.”

Billaud Varennes brought several other charges against Roberspierre, among others, that he occasioned several Members of the Revolutionary Committee of the Section of Indivisibility, whose patriotism was never suspected, to be thrown into prison.

He accused him of having seceded from the Committee of Public Safety during the space of four decades, and at the time when the decree relative to the Revolutionary Tribunal was in agitation, a decree which originated in him, which was so ill received, and whose object was to expel from the Convention all *impure men*, that is to say, all those who were disagreeable to him—Billaud also accused Roberspierre of having saved from the scaffold a Secretary who had been convicted of stealing 40,000 livres, and of being surrounded by men of bad characters, particularly Daubigny. After an energetic speech against Roberspierre, Billaud Varennes concluded by denouncing him as a tyrant, and an enemy to his country.

Roberspierre attempted to speak.

The members cried out *a bas le Tyran* (down with the Tyrant.)

TALLIEN

TALLIEN—after having brought to the recollection of the Convention that the long lists of proscribed persons had been framed in the house of Robespierre, fixed his eyes on the statue of Brutus, which he invoked in the most solemn manner. He drew a dagger from his pocket, and declared that he had armed himself with that weapon for the purpose of ridding the earth of a tyrant, if the Convention did not strike him with the axe of the law. He declared, that the people were always just—that they attached themselves neither to Robespierre, nor to any one man or set of men, but to Liberty alone. Tallien then alluded to the last Sitting of the Jacobins; in which Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, had the audacity to insult the Representatives of the People. He desired the Convention to recollect the following expression which Robespierre had, in one of the recent Sitzings of the Jacobins, addressed to the journalists—“*I forbid you to report my speeches, until you have communicated your reports to me.*”

BILLAUD VARENNES denounced as accomplices of the conspiracy (which was on the point of being carried into effect, and whose object was to annihilate the National Convention) Boulanger, who said to Hebert while he was employed in making out his list of proscriptions, *Write and we will strike*—Dufresne who had been a party to the treachery of Dumourier—Dumas who attempted to provoke the Jacobin Club to assassinate the Representatives of the people—and La Valette an ex-noble the *protege* of Robespierre, and one of the Commanders of the armed force of Paris—He concluded by moving, that those persons should be arrested.—Decreed.

DELMAS moved that the adjutant-generals and the aids-de-camp of Henriot, should be put in a state of arrest.—Decreed.

Daubigny

Daubigny and Segais were also ordered to be arrested.

After having heard speeches from Tallien, Billaud Varennes, Freron, Elle Lacoste, Delmas, and several other Members, the Convention unanimously decreed, after deliberating on each motion, that Robespierre the elder, Robespierre the younger, St. Just, Couthon, and Lebas should be put in a state of arrest, and their papers sealed up.

The decree was immediately put in execution, and all the arrested Members, Couthon excepted, were carried by the proper officers through the bar of the Convention.

COLLOT D'HERBOIS afterwards made a long speech amidst a thunder of applause.

On the 28th, about seven o'clock in the evening, Robespierre the elder, Robespierre, junior, Couthon, St. Just, Le Bas, Henriot, his *Etat Major*, La Valette, Boulanger, Aubigny, Segais, the Mayor, and the National Agent of the Commune of Paris, Dumas, President of the Jury, and Nicolas, a Jury of the Revolutionary Tribunal, were guillotined on the *Place de la Bastille*, without the least tumult whatever.

Thus, of the leading Members of Government, only three have escaped the proscription, viz. Barrere, Billaud Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois. It has long been perceived, that the party of Bourdon de l'Oise and Tallien were risen in the public opinion, who ranged on their side.

The Tribunal on the 25th, 26th, and 27th condemned 135 persons to death, the most remarkable of whom is the famous Baron de Trenck, aged 70 years. There was also a number of male and female *ci-devant noblesse* guillotined the day after the execution of Robespierre.

THE END.

